

# ***City of Houston***

## ***Emergency Management Plan***

### ***Volume I, Basic Plan***

***A STRATEGIC GUIDE FOR A CITYWIDE  
RESPONSE TO AND RECOVERY FROM MAJOR  
EMERGENCIES AND DISASTERS***

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***Prepared By:  
Office of Emergency Management***

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## Record of Changes and Review

### Record of Changes

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Purpose

The City of Houston's Emergency Management Plan (EMP) applies to all areas within the corporate limits of the City of Houston. The Basic Plan, Volume 1 of the overall EMP, provides the general, conceptual framework for a coordinated multi-agency response and efficient use of resources during a major emergency or disaster.

The EMP is not a detailed emergency checklist or "quick action" guide. It is a planning document meant to provide the guidance, framework, and insight into citywide strategic thinking and decision-making as it relates to emergency preparedness and disaster response.

While it can be used as a reference when integrating internal plans into strategic, citywide operational plans, it does not replace the responsibility a department has in developing and testing its own emergency plans. This plan can help establish the relationships, responsibilities, and general guidelines for departments and agencies to use in developing their detailed emergency "quick action" guides. It can also be used to help create emergency checklists, field emergency plans, departmental emergency plans, emergency-related standard operating guidelines, and emergency-related general orders.

The EMP is an *all-hazards* document containing the concepts and general guidance that would apply regardless of the nature or origin of the emergency or disaster. It is not designed to address unique conditions that result from a particular hazard. It does, however, provide the planning framework within which emergency operations staff and other relevant department and agency staff members work together to develop and maintain hazard-specific plans.

Among other things, the EMP contains information concerning:

- The chain of command for emergency and/or disaster operations
- The emergency powers of government
- Alerting, operating and recovery procedures
- The functions of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Incident Management System (IMS)
- Guidelines for coordinating operations among departments and between field and EOC operations during major emergencies and/or disasters
- The authority for the development and execution of training exercises
- The administrative procedures for maintaining and updating emergency plans



- The requirement for all City departments to contribute in the development of functional and supporting Annexes to this plan
- The emergency responsibilities of each department and agency
- The responsibility of each department or agency to develop its detailed emergency plans to support the city-wide EMP
- The basic interfaces with state and federal agencies
- The delegation of authority, per the Vernon's Texas Civil Annotated Statutes (VTCA), Government Code, Chapter 418, Emergency Management Act (as amended), and the Governor's Executive Order

## **1.2 Authorities and References**

The organizational and operational concepts contained in this plan are set forth on the basis of the following authorities and references.

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief & Emergency Assistance Act, (as amended), 42 U.S.C. 5121
- Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, 42 U.S.C. 5101
- Emergency Management and Assistance, 44 CFR
- Hazardous Waste Operations & Emergency Response, 29 CFR 1910.120
- Federal Response Plan
- Federal Radiological Emergency Response Plan
- FEMA, State and Local Guide (SLG) 101: Guide for All-Hazard Emergency Operations Planning
- State of Texas Government Code, Chapter 418 (Emergency Management)
- State of Texas Government Code, Chapter 433 (State of Emergency)
- State of Texas Government Code, Chapter 791 (Inter-local Cooperation Contracts)
- State of Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 778 (Emergency Management Assistance Compact)
- State of Texas Executive Order of the Governor Relating to Emergency Management
- State of Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 1, Chapter 7 (Division of Emergency Management)
- State of Texas Emergency Management Plan

- Texas Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, Local Emergency Management Planning Guide, DEM-10
- Texas Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, Disaster Recovery Manual
- Texas Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, Mitigation Handbook, DEM-21
- City of Houston City Charter, as amended, November 6, 2001
- City Ordinance #91-1343, Dated September 18, 1991

### 1.3 Acronyms

Below are listed the acronyms used in the body of this document.

<b>ARC</b>	American Red Cross
<b>DEM</b>	State of Texas, Division of Emergency Management
<b>DDC</b>	Disaster District Committee
<b>DMC</b>	Disaster Management Committee
<b>DPS</b>	Texas Department of Public Safety
<b>EAS</b>	Emergency Alert System
<b>EMC</b>	Emergency Management Coordinator
<b>EMP</b>	Emergency Management Plan
<b>EMS</b>	Houston Fire Department Emergency Medical Services
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operations Center
<b>EPI</b>	Emergency Public Information
<b>ESF</b>	Emergency Support Function
<b>FEOC</b>	Field Emergency Operations Center
<b>FEWS</b>	Flood Early Warning System
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>HAZMAT</b>	Hazardous Materials
<b>HFD</b>	Houston Fire Department
<b>HISD</b>	Houston Independent School District
<b>HPD</b>	Houston Police Department
<b>IC</b>	Incident Commander
<b>IMS</b>	Incident Management System

<b>OEM</b>	Houston Office of Emergency Management
<b>PIO</b>	Public Information Office
<b>SA</b>	Salvation Army
<b>SARA</b>	Superfund Amendments and Re-authorization Act.
<b>SOG</b>	Standard Operating Guidelines
<b>UC</b>	Unified Command
<b>VTCA</b>	Vernon's Texas Civil Annotated Statutes

## **1.4 Plan, Development, and Maintenance**

### **1.4.1 The Emergency Management Plan (EMP)**

The EMP, including this Basic Plan and supporting annexes, applies to the City of Houston and its incorporated areas. The EMP was developed to provide a general framework for the coordinated response and efficient use of resources during a major emergency and/or disaster. It provides conceptual guidance for a multi-agency comprehensive response and addresses related issues, emergency organization, incident management, and individual and departmental responsibilities.

### **1.4.2 The Role of Annexes To The Emergency Management Plan**

The Emergency Management Basic Plan is supported by a series of separate functional and supporting Annexes that address specific critical functions that occur in most major emergencies. In most cases annexes are designed to provide the guidance to City departments in the development of their internal plans or standard operating guidelines (SOGs). Annex planning and development consists of gathering input from departments or organizations that play a central role in the function that the annex addresses. The Houston Office of Emergency Management (OEM) develops the final draft of the annex, which is then reviewed for final approval. Departments then develop the necessary policies or SOGs that would be needed by personnel to implement or support emergency operations. This includes any training or orientation needed to ensure that departmental operations could be carried out as part of a department's mitigation and preparedness activities. Additional information on training and preparedness can be found in **Section 2.2.2** of this document.

Listed below are the specific functional and supporting Annexes, which are contained in a separate volume, and when combined with the Basic Plan comprise the City's EMP.

## Functional Annexes

**ESF# 1 - Transportation (Annex S):** Describes how the movement of both people and resources will be coordinated during disaster events. Addresses the roles of the Metropolitan Regional Transportation Agency (METRO) and other agencies.

**ESF# 2 - Communications (Annex B):** Describes the systems and procedures for communicating during a disaster. It identifies communication system capabilities within the EOC.

**ESF# 3 - Public Works & Engineering (Annex K):** Describes the department's responsibilities to manage and operate the City's infrastructure. Addresses tasks that include fresh water production, collection and treatment of wastewater and maintenance of roads, streets, bridges, traffic control and storm water systems.

**ESF# 4 - Firefighting & Search and Rescue (Annex F):** Describes how the Fire Department will respond during citywide emergencies and disasters. Addresses resources and support provided by Suppression, and Search and Rescue.

**ESF# 5 - Direction and Control (Annex N):** Describes the organization and procedures for coordinating the City's response and recovery activities. Addresses EOC configuration, staffing and management, information management and emergency decision making,

**ESF# 6 – Shelter/Mass Care (Annex C):** Describes the actions required to provide shelter and care to people displaced by a disaster. Addresses the roles of the American Red Cross (ARC), Salvation Army (SA) and other agencies involved in shelter/mass care operations.

**ESF# 7 - Resource Management (Annex M):** Describes the process for ensuring appropriate resources are available to meet the needs of the City during emergencies and disasters. Addresses the effective use of personnel, equipment and resources as well as emergency procurement procedures.

**ESF# 8 – Health and Medical (Annex H):** Describes the responsibilities of the Health and Human Services Department during Citywide emergencies and disasters. Addresses medical care, including treatment transport and tracking of the injured, disposition of the deceased, sanitation, vector control, mental health and other coordination roles as necessary.

**ESF# 9 – Search and Rescue (Annex R):** See ESF# 4 (Annex F)

**ESF# 10 – Hazardous Materials (Annex Q):** Describes the City's response procedures unique to hazardous material incidents. Addresses the roles and responsibilities of the City and private entities in response to a hazardous material incident and provides guidelines to protect the population and environment from a hazardous material incident.

**ESF# 11 - Food:** See ESF# 6 – Shelter/Mass Care (Annex C)

**ESF# 12 – Utilities (Annex L):** Describes the operational concepts, responsibilities and procedures to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover

from a temporary disruption in utility services that threatens public health and safety.

## **Supporting Annexes**

**Debris Management (Annex W):** Describes a plan that will ensure that efficient and effective methods are used to remove and dispose of disaster debris. Addresses organizational roles and responsibilities, expediting debris response and recovery efforts and implementing and coordinating private sector Debris Removal and Disposal contracts.

**Donation Management (Annex T):** Describes how donations will be solicited, managed and distributed in response to community needs following a disaster. Addresses the roles of social service agencies and the City.

**Emergency Public Information (Annex I):** Describes a plan for the effective collection and dissemination of emergency public information and for the minimization of confusion, misinformation and rumors during times of an emergency or disaster.

**Evacuation (Annex E):** Describes the City's evacuation process. Addresses the procedures for determining when evacuation is necessary, responsibility for coordinating an evacuation, evacuation planning, transportation, and security of evacuated area and controlling re-entry.

**Hazard Mitigation (Annex P):** Describes the concepts for administrative and operational activities that could lead to the reduction and/or possible removal of those conditions that cause potential hazards or are dangerous to the public. Addresses long-term programs that could help reduce the negative effects of emergencies or disasters, and develop guidelines to manage efforts in concert with state and federal policies.

**Human Services (Annex O):** Describes how the City will provide human services to persons requiring assistance, other than shelter/mass care, after an emergency or disaster. Addresses needs such as Crisis Counseling and Emergency Assistance.

**Law Enforcement (Annex G):** Describes how the Police Department will respond during citywide emergencies and disasters. Addresses their primary responsibilities of law enforcement traffic control and crowd control.

**Legal (Annex U):** Describes a plan for the rendering of legal services to the Mayor and other City officials during times of an emergency or disaster. Addresses emergency powers legislated to City officials and prepare legal documents required to execute emergency powers.

**Radiological Protection (Annex D):** Describes the organizations (City and State) that are responsible for radiological monitoring and reporting and outlines their tasks and responsibilities needed for an effective response program.

**Recovery (Annex J):** Describes programs and procedures for recovering from the consequences of a disastrous event and restoring the City to a pre-disaster

condition. Addresses the role of the Federal, State and City individual assistance/public assistance programs and disaster mitigation.

**Terrorist Incident Response (Annex V):** Describes how the City will operate during the crisis and consequences management phases of anticipated or actual incidents.

**Warning (Annex A):** Describes the systems and procedures for gathering hazard information and providing alert and warning information to the public. Addresses the City's participation in the Emergency Alert System (EAS), Cable Override, National Warning System (NAWAS) and the role of the media.

### 1.4.3 Plan Distribution

Primary distribution of the Emergency Management Basic Plan and Annexes will be made electronically using the Adobe Portable Document Format. It may also be distributed via an EMP CD-ROM. Paper copies will be distributed to those organizations or departments that are unable to use the electronic version.

Updates to the Emergency Management Basic Plan and Annexes will contain the latest revision date in calendar month and year in the lower left-hand corner of the footer and on the cover page of the document. Revisions or corrections to the plan may be made in one of three ways:

**Revised Electronic Copies:** Primary distribution of the plan and subsequent updates will be made electronically using either email or mailed to appropriate individuals on a floppy disc. The OEM will maintain distribution lists.

**Pen and ink corrections:** Bulletins will be distributed by the OEM requesting that minor corrections be hand entered and that an entry be made on the Record of Changes and Review form. These corrections are generally minor and will be made by OEM as necessary.

**Replacement pages:** Significant revisions will be made by distributing entire replacement pages.

### 1.4.4 Updates and Maintenance

The EMP must be revised or updated by a formal change at least every five years. §418.043(4) of the Government Code provides that the Division of Emergency Management (DEM) of the State of Texas shall review local emergency management plans. The process for submitting new or updated planning documents to DEM is described in Chapter 6 of the DEM-10. The OEM is responsible for maintaining the City's EMP and submitting copies of planning documents to the DEM Regional Liaison Officer.

When the EMP has been revised and/or updated, it is sent to the Mayor for signature. Annexes to the EMP also undergo a development and review process. Each annex is reviewed and upgraded every five years. These revisions will generally result in the publication of a new annex. This process helps avoid the proliferation of out-of-date versions that may not have been

properly maintained. Key stakeholders participate in the development, or review, of the annex. It is then forwarded to appropriate department directors for approval before final adoption. Annexes to the EMP can be updated as necessary when deficiencies are identified after drills, exercises, changes in City of Houston organizational structure, or changes in technology. Updates will be carried out according to procedures set forth in the EMP.

## **1.5 Situation**

Houston, the fourth largest city in the nation, has a population of over 2 million and the metropolitan statistical area (SMSA) population is approximately 4 million. The City's corporate limits cover an area of 617 square miles. Several key geographic and human factors make Houston vulnerable to a variety of major emergencies and/or disasters.

Houston is home to several major Colleges, Universities and The Texas Medical Center. These facilities include a number of chemical, biological and nuclear teaching facilities or research laboratories. The Port of Houston contains numerous petrochemical manufacturing facilities and distribution centers. There is also a significant threat of hazardous material accidents involving the transportation, manufacture, and storage of chemicals on the highways and near neighborhoods. In addition, there are several large professional sports stadiums and arenas located in the City.

### **1.5.1 Weather**

Houston's weather can be erratic. Severe thunderstorms and flooding are significant threats. They often result in widespread disruptions of transportation, utilities, and other vital services. Although the City is inland from the Gulf of Mexico, tropical storms and hurricanes pose a significant threat to Houston. Such storms in the Gulf of Mexico can spawn torrential rains, flooding, high winds and tornadoes in the Houston area. Also of concern is summer heat, which can cause an increase in medical emergencies and necessitate the operation of cooling centers.

### **1.5.2 Transportation Routes**

The Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Railroads both have large switching yards located in the City and have lines that travel near densely populated neighborhoods. The Union Pacific tracks cross Lake Houston, which is a major water storage area for the City. Both railroads carry bulk shipments of an array of hazardous chemicals in addition to normal freight.

Interstate Highways 10 and 45 traverse the City and run adjacent to densely populated areas. U.S. Highways 59 and 290 both carry large amounts of truck traffic. U.S. Highway 59 serves as a major portion of the North American Free Trade route. In addition, Loop 610, the designated hazardous cargo route (HC), encircles the central city area. Highway 225 on the City's eastside serves as the

major transportation route for the petrochemical industry. In addition, a number of these highways also serve as major hurricane evacuation routes.

Houston owns and operates three airport facilities. These include an international airport facility (George Bush Intercontinental Airport Houston), Hobby Airport and Ellington Field. Bush Intercontinental and Hobby accommodate most major airlines and air cargo services. Ellington Field houses aircraft for the Texas Air National Guard and NASA. It also serves as a commuter airport. Aircraft approach and departure lanes to these airports cut across densely populated areas and the downtown area of the City. There are also several smaller general aviation airports in the Houston area.

### **1.5.3 Hazardous Materials**

The Houston area is faced with the potential for occurrences, or accidents involving hazardous materials and substances that could pose an unreasonable risk to health, safety, and/or property while being manufactured, stored, or transported. These substances may be toxic, corrosive, flammable, reactive, an irritant, certain infectious agents, radiological materials, petroleum products, industrial chemicals or waste substances. Hundreds of shipments of hazardous materials travel over the highways within the City on a daily basis. In addition, multiple oil and natural gas pipelines run through heavily populated areas of the City. Further, the City operates water production and wastewater treatment facilities that utilize large quantities of potentially hazardous chemicals.

### **1.5.4 Utilities**

CenterPoint Energy generates electric power and distributes power on behalf of a number of other companies. Electrical usage can fluctuate with weather changes and industrial growth. They also provide natural gas service to the Houston area. Southwestern Bell provides phone service as well as the telephone infrastructure. Cellular telephone service is provided by a number of companies. The City operates eight major water production plants, numerous well sites, six high capacity wastewater treatment facilities, and over forty smaller treatment plants. During severe weather events, loss of power is a possibility to any specific area of the City. Houston is subject to severe thunderstorms, hurricanes and occasional winter storms that can result in extensive and lengthy failures of electrical power and other utilities

## **1.6 Assumptions**

This plan is based on the assumption that in the event of an emergency or disaster the City will have enough resources to implement the plan. If the City does not have sufficient resources, the assumption is that Harris County, state and/or federal resources will supplement those of the City, making available resources sufficient to implement the plan.

Houston is subject to the types of incidents above and by the specific hazards listed on the following Hazard Risk Index. The OEM prepared the Hazard Risk Index using the methodology developed by the Federal Emergency Management



Agency (FEMA). It takes into consideration the unique features, conditions and history of the area.

Although global political changes have dramatically reduced the likelihood of nuclear war, scenarios involving accidental launches, attacks by developing countries, and terrorist acts are still possible.

As different as these various threats may appear, their management will generally require similar resources and procedures, direction and control, communications, resource coordination, and public information. The comprehensive emergency plans for the City of Houston are developed and maintained based on the results of the following Hazard Risk Index.

## **1.7 Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment**

The Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment is designed to aid in determining which hazards could result in major emergencies or disasters. This assessment uses historical records and estimates to determine the probability of a hazard occurring. It uses estimates of the number of people that would be affected if the hazard occurred to quantify the effects of the hazard. This is a general, subjective analysis, and there may be seasonal variances from these general trends. For example, during the summer and fall months, the Houston area is more prone to Tropical Storms and Hurricanes than at other times of the year. The effect indicator shows only the relative numbers of people that will be affected by the event. It does not attempt to quantify the possible property losses, loss of business, public relations impacts or other effects of a particular hazard.

The Probability and Effects number codes used on the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment table are shown below.

### **1.7.1 Levels of Probability**

- 7** happens once or more per year
- 6** happens once every 1-3 years
- 5** happens once every 3-5 years
- 4** happens once every 5-10 years
- 3** happens once every 10-50 years
- 2** happens once every 100 years
- 1** has never occurred

### **1.7.2 Levels of Effects**

- 7** would affect 100,000 or more people
- 6** would affect 50,000 to 99,999 people

5 would affect 10,000 to 49,999 people

4 would affect 5,000 to 9,999 people

3 would affect 1,000 to 4,999 people

2 would affect 500 to 999 people

1 would affect 1 to 499 people

The product of the **Probability** times the **Effects** of the hazard equals the **Hazard Probability / Effects Index** for the hazard.

The following table contains only those hazards that received a rating of 12 or higher and require an ongoing planning effort. The OEM maintains under separate cover a listing of the hazards that may impact the City.

### 1.7.3 Hazard Probability / Effects Index

<b>Hazard Probability/Effects Index</b>			
<b>Natural Events</b>	Probability	Effect	Risk Index
• Severe Thunderstorms/Flooding	7	6	42
• Coastal Storm (Tropical Storm/Hurricane)	6	7	42
• Extreme Heat / Cold	5	5	25
• Drought	4	5	20
• Tornado	6	2	12
<b>Technological Events</b>	Probability	Effect	Risk Index
• Hazardous Materials Incident - Highway	7	6	42
• Power Failure	4	6	24
• Hazardous Materials Incident – Rail	7	2	14
• Hazardous Materials Incident – Pipeline	7	2	14
• Hazardous Materials Incident - Fixed Facility	7	2	14
<b>Human Caused Events</b>	Probability	Effect	Risk Index
• High Profile Events	7	7	49
• Terrorism (includes Chemical, Biological and Nuclear)	6	7	42

## 1.8 The Role of Emergency Management

Emergency Management, at the local government level, is one that is dictated by State law and the reality of City operations. State law recognizes the Mayor as the person responsible for emergency management in the City. The Mayor, as Emergency Management Director, is responsible for assuring that coordinated and effective emergency response systems are developed and maintained within the City of Houston. The Mayor also makes policy decisions regarding emergency operations and implements the emergency powers of local government as necessary. The Mayor can designate an individual to oversee the day-to-day management of the City's emergency management program and the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) has been delegated this responsibility.

The EMC serves as the staff advisor to the Mayor on Emergency Management issues and implements policy as required. The Coordinator will support the City's preparedness programs and work with the City departments in developing, maintaining and exercising their respective annexes to this plan. The Coordinator will recommend and monitor the increased readiness actions of the City, keep the City departments apprised of the City's current preparedness status and will coordinate with the Disaster District Chairperson as required. The Coordinator is responsible for preparing and activating the EOC as necessary. The Coordinator serves as the day-to-day liaison between OEM and City departments, other emergency management agencies, volunteer organizations and the private sector.

The OEM is responsible for coordinating all components of the City's emergency management system to include resources from all sectors before, during and after an emergency as well as activities relating to mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. The EMC provides overall direction and coordination of the City's emergency management program and assures the operational capability of the OEM.

### **1.8.1 Components of Emergency Management**

Emergency Management's primary focus is on preparedness. However, in today's environment, it is no longer enough to merely have sufficient resources to respond to a disaster. Communities must also take a proactive role in preventing disasters before they occur. Of equal importance is government's responsibility to aid in a community's recovery after a disaster. Emergency Management can be broken down into four phases. They are mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. These principles assist planners in developing and organizing comprehensive emergency plans. A brief description of each follows.

#### **1.8.1.1 Mitigation**

Refers to activities that actually eliminate or reduce the chance of occurrence or the effects of a disaster. Recent research has shown that much can be done to either prevent major emergencies or disasters from ever happening, or if nothing else, at least reduce the damaging impact if they cannot be prevented.

#### **1.8.1.2 Preparedness**

Planning how to respond in case an emergency or disaster occurs and working to increase resources available to respond effectively. Preparedness activities are designed to help save lives and minimize damage by preparing people to respond appropriately when an emergency is imminent.

#### **1.8.1.3 Response**

Activities that occur during and immediately following a disaster. They are designed to provide emergency assistance to victims of the event and reduce the likelihood of secondary damage.

#### 1.8.1.4 Recovery

The final phase of the emergency management cycle. Recovery continues until all systems return to normal, or near normal. Short-term recovery returns vital life support systems to minimum operating standards. Long-term recovery from a disaster may go on for years. Recovery is completed when the disaster area is returned to its pre-disaster condition or the area is re-built and the economy has returned.

#### 1.8.2 OEM Responsibilities

The OEM coordinates emergency preparedness activities for the City as required by local and state law. It accomplishes this task by acting as a facilitator. Emergency Management provides the *means* for management, control, and communications for multiple agencies or departments that respond to an event or a crisis. The OEM can act as the lead agency to an incident; however, they typically provide advice and technical or logistical support to the actual incident commanders.

The OEM assists in the comprehensive development of policies, plans, and procedures to protect life and property. It does so by bringing the key players and stakeholders together to develop the solutions or plans. Although it acts as a facilitator for the development of emergency planning, OEM does create a number of strategic plans and coordinates emergency planning as required by state law. The EMP is one of these documents.

Annexes are prepared by the OEM with input from appropriate agencies. Annexes provide comprehensive planning for hazards encountered in Houston.

In addition, the OEM performs a number of other activities that enhance the City's readiness and response. These include:

- Coordinating all phases of development and distribution of the EMP and related Annexes.
- Establishing liaisons with County, State, Federal and other emergency planning, response and relief agencies.
- Ensuring operation of the warning and communications systems.
- Disseminating information on mitigation and emergency preparedness to the public.
- Maintaining the emergency proclamations orders and copies of ordinances at the EOC, in coordination with the Legal Department.
- Coordinating the development and execution of exercises and other drills.
- Maintaining the EOC and developing procedures for its use during emergencies.
- Monitoring severe weather and other hazardous conditions.

- Coordination of advisories with the National Weather Service Office and other emergency response agencies.
- Coordination with the private sector (Downtown Management District, Texas Medical Center, Area Hospitals, etc.)
- Contacting the Fire, Police, 9-1-1 Communications Centers and other appropriate agencies when potentially severe weather is observed or a hazardous condition report is received.
- Activating the EOC in coordination with City management and affected departments.
- Coordinating with the Mayor's Office of Communications on contacts with news media to issue public warnings and emergency preparedness and response information.
- Coordinating with the Harris County Office of Emergency Management on the Flood Warning System and status of the Bayous
- Supporting field operations by:
  - Providing technical information
  - Coordinating the location of emergency shelters
  - Coordinating requests for use of METRO bus(es)
  - Coordinating use of Dynamic Message Signs and Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) with Texas Department of Transportation
  - Disseminating emergency information to the public
  - Notification to other City departments, State and Federal agencies as needed.
- Providing advice on emergency-related issues to stakeholders and City departments
- Outfitting and maintenance of the EOC. [REDACTED]
- Coordinating EOC operations and serving as advisor to City management and departmental representatives during EOC activations
- Assisting in incident documentation for historical and post-incident evaluation purposes
- Designating staging locations for volunteer help and mutual aid forces

### **1.8.3 The Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**

The purpose of the EOC is to coordinate management decisions, resources, and public information on a strategic level during emergencies and/or disasters. The

EOC is equipped with communications, computers, charts, maps, warning systems, emergency power, and food for 24-hour operation. Representatives at the EOC support the on-scene operations, coordinate among City, County, State, and Federal agencies; establish priorities; evaluate urgency and magnitude of major problems as they occur; request outside assistance; and act as the center for recovery assistance operations.

Should the City's primary EOC be rendered unusable for any reason, the alternate EOC will be activated. In addition, the OEM maintains a mobile Field Emergency Operations Center (FEOC), which is a specialized vehicle, designed to function as an extension of the EOC. This state-of-the-art mobile EOC can be deployed in the field to provide on scene management of significant incidents. This vehicle is typically used for short-term incidents.

## **2.0 MITIGATION AND PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES**

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### **2.1 Continuity of Government Planning**

Continuity of government planning is primarily designed to enable entities to prevent interruption of critical business functions, minimize the impact of interruptions that may occur, and return to normal operations quickly and with minimal loss after an interruption occurs. While the OEM works with appropriate City departments to develop a citywide continuity plan, every City department still needs to develop a plan for their own internal operations. The OEM is available to assist City departments with developing, training and testing continuity of government plans. The OEM can also provide coordination assistance if several City departments are working together on interdependent planning.

Continuity of government includes planning for:

- Lines of succession (back-ups for key decision-making and operating personnel)
- Alternate operating procedures
- Back-ups for key facilities and equipment
- Preservation of critical records

City government, like most large organizations, depends increasingly on automated systems in providing public services. City departments must include plans for maintaining communications networks in their continuity of government plans. Communications networks include:

- Mainframe computers
- Minicomputers
- Personal computers
- Telephone systems
- Faxes
- Pagers, Radios and other communication equipment

An important component of planning is including outside agencies that may either be key resources or stakeholders in specific planning issues. Input from these parties should be sought and included as part of the planning process.

#### **2.1.1 Resource Management**

Each department or agency is primarily responsible for managing its own resources. Resources include supplies, equipment, facilities and people. The representatives in the EOC will assist departments and agencies during emergencies in acquiring resources that are not available to them through usual channels and procedures.

### **2.1.1.1 Supplies, Equipment and Facilities**

Management of supplies, equipment and facilities involves:

- Determining which resources are essential to the department's operations.
- Establishing repair or replacement priorities.
- Establishing resource allocation guidelines according to the operational priorities of the department.
- Establishing schedules and procedures for routine maintenance.
- Performing routine equipment and facilities reviews and maintenance.
- Replacing resources that are irreparable or used up.
- Acquiring additional resources as demands increase.

### **2.1.1.2 Personnel**

Emergencies may involve an extended period of rescue, clean up, and damage assessment, which means that personnel may be doing strenuous work for extremely long hours.

Departments should review the appropriate City of Houston Human Resource policies. In addition, the following should also be included in either the human resource management sections of their service continuity or written standard operating guidelines:

- Callback of emergency response or recovery personnel.
- Communicating with employees who are not directly involved in emergency response or recovery
- Communicating with family members of emergency response and recovery personnel
- Caring for the needs of the families of emergency response and recovery personnel
- Coordinating the use of personnel for jobs other than their normal assignments during emergencies
- Coordinating the use of temporary outside or loaned personnel from other organizations to assist with emergency response and recovery
- Providing food, housing, medical care and relief for emergency response and recovery personnel
- Providing for emergency expenditures and payroll for emergency response and recovery personnel



- Adjusting shift scheduling as needed (for example, changing from three, eight-hour shifts to two, twelve-hour shifts, re-assigning personnel who normally work the third shift to work one of the other two shifts)
- Providing regular, scheduled rest and relief for emergency response and recovery personnel
- Providing critical incident stress debriefing and counseling for emergency response and recovery personnel and their families, if needed

#### **2.1.1.3 Safeguarding Vital Records**

Vital records are defined as those records that would be required by the City or departments to reestablish operations should an emergency or disaster threaten or adversely affect their operations. The custodian of records for each department is responsible for identifying all vital records within the department and taking appropriate action to secure and preserve them.

## **2.2 General Mitigation and Preparedness Activities**

Some emergencies or disasters can be prevented. Others may not be preventable, but the likelihood and impact of most types of emergencies and disasters can be reduced or mitigated. Mitigation consists of activities designed to eliminate or reduce the impact of an emergency or disaster such as:

- Research
- Monitoring
- Inspecting
- Flood plain management
- Regulation
- Public education

The OEM and other departments and agencies are involved in on-going mitigation activities throughout the year. OEM conducts mitigation and preparedness education for citizens, agency and department EOC representatives.

The OEM also facilitates the applications for grants that go towards the funding of mitigation projects. They also undertake projects such as Hazards Analysis & Vulnerability Assessments to determine the hazards that are most likely to impact the Houston area and which will have the most serious, widespread impact. The Hazards Analysis provides information to help agencies and departments determine how best to spend their mitigation efforts and resources.

Mitigation projects often result from actual emergencies that occur or from emergency exercises. After the event or exercise, OEM or other departments or

agencies identify needs and opportunities for mitigation to prevent or reduce the impact of future emergencies or disasters.

## **2.2.1 Planning**

### **2.2.1.1 Strategic Planning**

This EMP and its accompanying annexes serve as strategic guidance for managing disasters. These plans are designed to provide guidance to City departments for the development of internal plans or (SOGs). The development of these documents includes input from other City departments. This participation is important since departments are required to implement plans or procedures that support the City's strategic principles of governing disaster management.

### **2.2.1.2 Department Level Planning**

While the OEM handles strategic planning, City departments are still responsible for the development of tactical plans that guide internal operations during an emergency. This planning can take the form of special plans or documents. Departments may also develop General Orders, SOGs, policies or procedures that address emergency operations.

## **2.2.2 Training**

Education is an important component of any preparedness plan. Proper briefings of personnel help to ensure their readiness should an emergency arise. Every department or agency should conduct "awareness" training for all personnel and conduct more in-depth training for personnel who will be components of either departmental or citywide emergency operations plans. Training with other departments should also be considered when focusing on issues that would bring such departments together in a given situation.

## **2.2.3 Available Training Resources in Disaster Management and Planning**

### **2.2.3.1 Training by the Office of Emergency Management**

The OEM provides several types of education or training, including:

- Public education to the citizens of Houston about home and business emergency mitigation and preparedness
- Training for the representatives from each department and agency that report to the EOC in an emergency or disaster

Another key training component is assistance in creating, assisting or managing emergency exercises. These exercises can be in any of the following forms.

- Orientations - briefings about emergencies, disasters or emergency management that do not involve emergency simulations
- Tabletop exercises - larger scale, multiple function "tabletop" (all activities or "play" are confined to the exercise room or table) exercises that use messages (no simulation of disaster events in the field) to simulate disaster events and initiate "play" and test interactions at the discussion table.
- Functional exercises - exercises that use messages at the exercise table as well as information received by television, telephone and radio (no simulation of disaster events in the field) to more realistically simulate disaster events and stimulate "play".
- Full-scale exercises - exercises that use messages at the exercise table; information received by television, telephone and radio; and simulation of disaster events in the field to realistically simulate disaster events and stimulate "play" both at the exercise table and in the field.

A key component of any exercise is a post-exercise review. This is a discussion session identifying the lessons learned from the exercise and the action required based on the needs identified during the exercise.

#### **2.2.3.2 Training by the State Division of Emergency Management (DEM)**

DEM offers training in Austin, and sometimes at other locations throughout the state, on a broad range of emergency management topics including:

- Principles to Emergency Management
- Emergency Planning
- Exercise Design
- Developing Volunteer Resources
- Continuity of Government
- Incident Command System
- Disaster Recovery Operations
- Emergency Public Information
- Terrorism
- Radiological Monitoring

These courses are available to department and agency emergency team personnel. For more information about these courses, contact the OEM.

### **2.2.3.3 Training by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

FEMA offers training on a vast array of emergency management topics in a variety of formats, including:

- Resident courses at the National Emergency Training Center at Emmitsburg, Maryland.
- Home study courses.
- Video conferences produced by FEMA's Emergency Education Network (EENET).

These courses are available to department and agency emergency team personnel. For more information about these courses, contact the OEM.

### **2.2.3.4 Training by Other Public and Private Organizations**

Training is also available in the form of publications, seminars, courses, and conferences from many non-governmental sources on a variety of emergency management topics. A few of the available topics include:

- Emergency preparedness, planning, response, and recovery
- Hazardous materials incident preparedness, planning, response, and recovery
- Business contingency planning or disaster recovery planning
- Emergency shelter management

Private and public organizations that provide such training include:

- ARC
- University of North Texas
- Texas A & M University

Professional societies and trade organizations, such as:

- Association of Contingency Planners
- Texas Safety Association
- Texas Floodplain Managers Association
- Texas Fire Service Public Educators

Other private and public organizations, including:

- Emergency and disaster product and service vendors
- Emergency and disaster consultants
- Disaster Recovery Institute

The OEM may have or be able to help you obtain more information about many of these types of emergency management training.

## 3.0 OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS RELATED TO RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

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### 3.1 Overview

The operational concepts outlined below establish the framework and guidance for the City of Houston's response to emergency or local disaster. A major emergency or disaster typically involves a number of elements that, for various reasons, cannot be effectively managed or controlled in the same way as the routine incidents that are encountered on a daily basis. However, there are similarities involving the fundamental concepts, procedures and mode of operation that can be successfully applied to major emergencies or disasters.

### 3.2 Types and Levels of Emergency

#### 3.2.1 Types of Emergency Situations

There are three general types of emergency situations.

**Incident** is a situation that is limited in scope and potential effects. Characteristics of an incident include:

- Involves a limited area and/or limited population.
- Evacuation or in-place sheltering is typically limited to the immediate area of the incident.
- Warning and public instructions are provided in the immediate area, not community-wide.
- One or two local response agencies or departments acting under an IC normally handle incidents. Requests for resource support are normally handled through agency and/or departmental channels.
- May require limited external assistance from other local response agencies or contractors.

**Emergency** is a situation larger in scope and more severe in terms of actual or potential effects than an incident. Characteristics include:

- Involves a large area, significant population, or critical facilities.
- May require implementation of large-scale evacuation or in-place sheltering and implementation of temporary shelter and mass care operations.
- May require community-wide warning and public instructions.
- Requires a sizable multi-agency response operating under an Incident Commander (IC).
- May require some external assistance from other local response agencies, contractors, and limited assistance from state or federal agencies.

- The EOC will be activated to provide general guidance and direction, coordinate external support, and provide resource support for the incident.

**Disaster** involves the occurrence or threat of significant casualties and/or widespread property damage that is beyond the capability of the local government to handle with its own resources. Characteristics include:

- Involves a large area, a sizable population, and/or important facilities.
- May require implementation of large-scale evacuation or in-place sheltering and implementation of temporary shelter and mass care operations.
- Requires community-wide warning and public instructions.
- Requires a response by all local response agencies operating under one or more IMSs.
- Requires significant external assistance from other local response agencies, contractors, and extensive state and/or federal assistance.
- The EOC will be activated to provide general guidance and direction, provide emergency information to the public, coordinate state and federal support, and coordinate resource support for emergency operations.

### 3.2.2 Levels of Emergency Readiness Condition

Most emergencies follow some recognizable build-up period during which actions can be taken to achieve a state of maximum readiness. The purpose of establishing different levels of emergency readiness is to try to place all responding departments in the same mindset about the severity and urgency of the situation so that they can anticipate needs and special requirements. The EMC or the staff of the OEM will notify departments and agencies of the levels of emergency readiness.

When an emergency situation occurs suddenly, without notice, or when the severity of an emergency escalates quickly, all of these actions will be performed in rapid succession.

These levels are very general and apply to all types of emergencies. The levels of emergency are dealt with in more detail within the context of each functional Annex, and specific actions will be detailed in departmental SOGs.

A series of color-coded levels, consistent with the Homeland Security Advisory System, has been adopted to depict the City's readiness condition relative to potential or actual threats of events directly impacting the Houston metro area. The designation and brief description of each are shown below.

**Green**

#### **Low Condition**

City departments emphasize preventive measures, mitigate possible hazards, train personnel, educate the public, develop effective coordination; and identify and evaluate potential hazards as to magnitude and effect. Emergency response

personnel ensure the optimum state of operational and equipment readiness and are available for emergency duty as the need arises. Departments begin corrective action if any resource limitations exist that could reduce their capability to respond effectively.

**Blue****Guarded Condition**

Implemented during the start of hurricane season, planning of large events, gatherings, high-level dignitary presence, or an incident or situation in which threatening conditions may never cause adverse effects. Agencies should review status of emergency plans.

**Yellow****Elevated Condition**

Implemented during severe weather watches, tropical weather exists within monitoring range, monitoring of large events, or a situation or event in which threatening conditions have developed, but which have not yet caused adverse effects. These situations typically involve personnel from the OEM briefing departments on the potential hazard as required. Selected emergency response elements may be placed on higher state of readiness. The EOC may or may not be activated.

**Orange****High Condition**

An emergency that is having a serious effect, but whose impact is limited to a particular geographical area of the City and/or involves a specific group of City departments. Further increase readiness of emergency response forces, review of personnel, equipment and inventory of critical consumable supplies. Take actions to enhance resource availability as needed. The EOC may be activated on a limited basis with only the OEM and selected departments being required to respond.

**Red****Severe Condition**

An emergency and/or disaster that is imminent or having a major impact on the entire community with a broad array of City departments and outside agencies involved. A State of Local Disaster has been, or will be, declared by the Mayor. The EOC is fully activated.

### 3.3 Departmental Notifications

In order to ensure a coordinated response to emergencies and disasters, City Departments are requested to advise the OEM or the EOC, if activated, of:

- Potentially or actually compromised infrastructure or resources necessary to provide services to the public.
- Situations or events that may escalate to the point that require the assistance of state or federal resources to respond to the incident.
- Any time a department plans to respond to a request for assistance from the State of Texas or a local jurisdiction during a major emergency or disaster that requires sending resources outside of the City of Houston.



This list is not all-inclusive. Departments should always be aware of the effects of events on other departments and the City as a whole, and use judgment in advising OEM whenever appropriate.

### **3.3.1 How to Notify**

Notification should be made to the OEM during normal business hours or if after-hours to the OEM duty person. Fax or e-mail **should not** be used for the initial notification, but may be used to provide additional background or technical information.

## **3.4 Incident Management and Coordination**

While the final authority for strategic decision-making rests with the Mayor, it does not eliminate the need for coordinating strategic and tactical decision making during an event or disaster. City departments have clearly established protocols and chains of command for incident management in their typical day-to-day operations. However, different departments have different ways of managing incidents. It is these differences that can lead to breakdowns in organization and management when more than one department or agency responds to an emergency or disaster. The City of Houston recognizes the importance of standardizing incident management and established protocols to guide local agencies in coordinated incident management.

The IMS was designed to provide a commonly accepted management structure that would result in better decisions and more effective use of available resources. It was specifically designed for incidents that involve many local, state, and federal agencies and multiple jurisdictions.

### **3.4.1 The Role of the Mayor**

The person who is ultimately responsible for managing any local disaster is the Mayor. The Texas Administrative Code (Title 37, Part 1, Chapter 7 subchapter A, RULE §7.2) identifies the Mayor as the designated agent in the administration and supervision of the Texas Disaster Act of 1975. This act makes the Mayor ultimately responsible for providing guidance for the emergency management program and directing and controlling emergency response and recovery activities.

The Mayor of the City of Houston may declare a local state of disaster. The Mayor may take measures in the interest of effective emergency management. These powers include, but are not limited to, wage, price, and rent controls and other economic stabilization measures; curfews, blockades, rules governing ingress and egress to the affected area and other security measures and limitations on utility usage. The Mayor may utilize, when deemed necessary, all physical resources within the City of Houston, whether publicly or privately owned. The City of Houston assumes no financial or civil liability for the use of such resources; however, accurate records of such use will be maintained in case reimbursement becomes possible.

Consumer complaints pertaining to alleged unfair or illegal business practices will be referred to the State Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division. Allegations concerning misconduct by representatives of the legal profession will be referred to the State Bar Association for appropriate action.

### **3.4.2 Lines of Succession**

1. The following is the line of succession for the Mayor:
  - Mayor Pro-tem
  - Vice Mayor Pro-tem
2. The following is the line of succession for the EMC:
  - Deputy EMC or designee
3. The following is the line of succession for Department Directors:
  - Deputy Director or designee

### **3.4.3 Structure and Components of the Incident Management System**

IMS is a hierarchical structure designed to manage specific events. There are two initial components: Command Staff and General Staff. The Command Staff are support positions to the IC and are Safety, Information, and Liaison. The General Staff works for the IC and are tasked functionally. The sections include Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration. All functions are preformed at every incident; however, until the assignment is delegated, the IC is responsible for the function.

Each is discussed in greater detail below.

#### **3.4.3.1 Command Staff**

The command section develops, directs, and maintains a viable organization. It also coordinates with other organizations, agencies, and the public. In large-scale incidents the Information Officer, Liaison Officer, and Safety Officer become components of the command staff.

##### **3.4.3.1.1 Information Officer (IO)**

Information Officers may respond from all agencies having significant involvement in the incident. The IC will assign a lead IO. This IO will normally be from the same agency as the Operations Section Chief, but may be from any appropriate agency. In the event of a major disaster, the IOs will work with the Mayor's Office of Communications to establish a Joint Information Center (JIC) in a nearby location or at the EOC to accommodate local and network media coverage.

##### **3.4.3.1.2 Liaison Officer**

The Liaison Officer is assigned by the IC and is responsible for coordinating Agency Representatives from local, state, federal, and private agencies that have responded to the command post. These representatives may have incidental involvement in the incident or may have technical or resource information needed by Incident Command, Planning, or Logistics functions.

#### **3.4.3.1.3 Safety Officer**

The IC will identify a Safety Officer generally from the same agency or discipline as the Operations Chief. The Safety Officer monitors overall safety at the incident and has the authority to stop operations he or she feels are dangerous. More than one Safety Officer may be identified depending on the complexity of the operation. In this case, the IC will identify a Lead Safety Officer who will coordinate all safety activities.

#### **3.4.3.2 General Staff**

General staff refers to the Section Chiefs of Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration.

##### **3.4.3.2.1 Operations Section**

The Operations Section is responsible for developing tactics and plans to meet the incident objectives established by Command. The Operations Chief becomes the key tactical decision-maker in large complex operations. To accomplish this, he or she may be assisted by deputies, if needed, to avoid becoming a bottleneck for decision-making or communications.

All activities associated with providing emergency response services should be part of Operations; they should not be delegated to other sections such as Logistics and Planning. Those sections are exclusively support for Incident Command and Operations.

##### **3.4.3.2.2 Planning Section**

In smaller events, the IC is responsible for planning, but when the incident is of larger scale, the IC establishes the Planning Section. The Planning Section's function includes the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information about the development of the incident and status of resources. They also prepare a demobilization plan that allows for the timely release of units committed to an incident. This section's responsibilities can also include creation of the Incident Action Plan (IAP), which defines the response activities and resource utilization for a specified time period.

##### **3.4.3.2.3 Logistics Section**

The Logistics Section is tasked with meeting the needs of the incident responders of the event. This means they are responsible for acquiring all manpower and material needed to accomplish the goals identified by the plans and operations sections. The importance of logistics management

increases when addressing an incident that extends over a period of days or weeks.

#### 3.4.3.2.4 Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is critical for tracking incident costs and reimbursements. Unless costs and financial operations are carefully recorded and justified, reimbursement of costs is difficult, if not impossible. The Finance/Administration Section is especially important when the incident is of a magnitude that may result in a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

### 3.4.4 Incident Management Philosophy

Incident Management is designed to facilitate timely and meaningful strategic decisions that make use of every available resource. Complex incidents involve various agencies with different legal mandates. These agencies often have different operational objectives, which may conflict with each other. These factors support the need for a **single IC** to make timely decisions and to resolve conflict.

Depending on the nature of the incident or emergency, it may not be possible or desirable to identify a single IC. More than one agency may have legal or jurisdictional responsibility for resolving the incident. Command may rest **equally** among these agencies. In these types of incidents, **Unified Command (UC)** formalizes a joint decision-making process designed to assure input from key agencies.

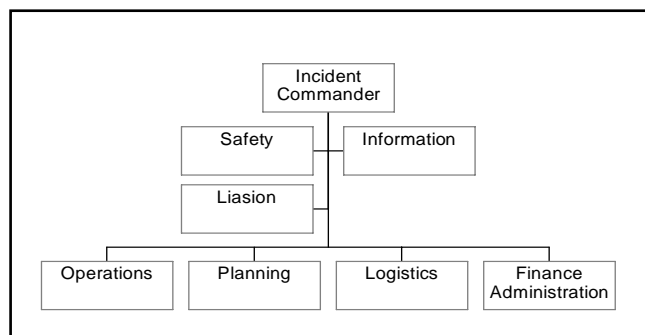
### 3.4.5 Choosing the Incident Management Structure

There will be times when it will be necessary to decide what type of incident management structure to employ. Below are some guidelines as employed by the IMS plan.

#### 3.4.5.1 Single Command

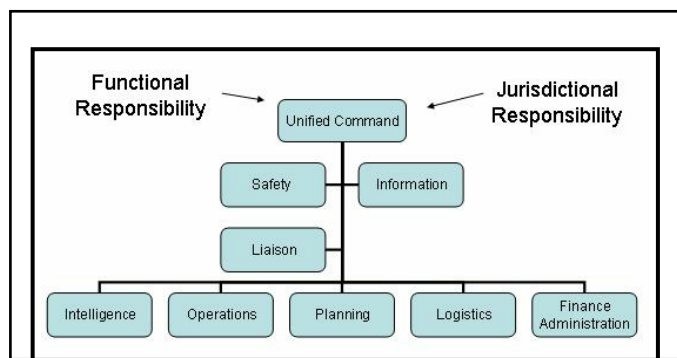
Single Command is generally indicated when **both** of the following are true.

- An incident is contained within and affects a single political jurisdiction, **and**
- A single agency has the legal responsibility for managing the principal hazard of the incident.



#### 3.4.5.2 Unified Command

UC is used when **either** of the following is true.



- An incident involves multiple hazards in which more than one agency has legal responsibility for managing, **or**
- An incident is situated in more than one political jurisdiction.

#### 3.4.5.2.1 Lead Agency

In some cases, it may become necessary to identify a Lead Agency for one of the following reasons:

- Rapidly developing emergency conditions require immediate action.
- Members of the UC cannot agree on a general course of action.
- Members of the UC fail to resolve conflict.

In these cases, a member of the UC may call for establishing a Lead Agency. The Lead Agency will transfer between existing or new members of the UC as the incident evolves.

#### 3.4.5.2.2 Responsibilities of the Lead Agency

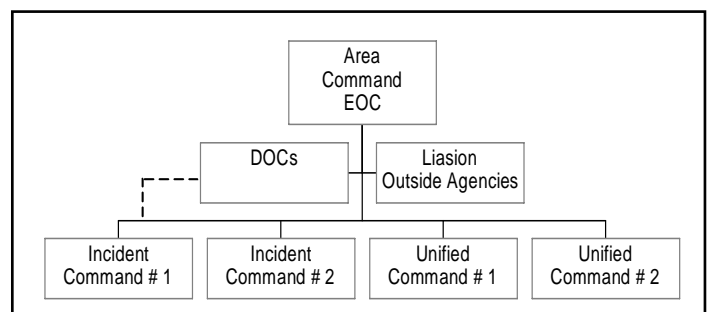
The lead agency has the following responsibilities:

- To lead a joint strategic decision-making process among the other members of the UC;
- To lead planning meetings and briefings (may be rotated among members of the UC);
- To assure that time-critical decisions are made in time for effective implementation. The Lead Agency may make immediate decisions, without the consent of the UC when absolutely necessary; and
- To resolve disagreements or conflicts among members of the UC or other responding agencies.

#### 3.4.6 Area Command

Area Command will normally be used when **either** multiple sites are involved or there is defused area-wide impact. This may involve widespread flooding, hurricane damage, or a large-scale civil disturbance. These types of incidents require area-wide coordination and policies. Area Command may include both single and/or unified commands.

Area Command is responsible for developing area-wide incident objectives, response priorities, operational policies, resource priorities and requesting assistance from the State and Federal Governments. Area Command will be established at the EOC.



### 3.4.7 The Role of the EOC

The purpose of the EOC is to coordinate management decisions, resources, and public information on a strategic level. The operation of the EOC doesn't eliminate the requirement that departments have for tactical level coordination of manpower and resources within their department. The EOC offers opportunity to weave the operations of various departments into a comprehensive City strategy of response to an incident or crisis. The EOC will also serve as area command when faced with multiple incidents. The EOC will generally coordinate directly with Department Operations Centers (DOCs), if established, but may also coordinate with the IC at major incidents to establish area-wide objectives, identify response priorities, and allocate limited resources.

### 3.4.8 Department Operations Centers (DOCs)

In a large-scale incident, the individual field units or crews will generally report to the DOC, if established. Major incidents involving UC will coordinate directly with the Area Command at the EOC. Individual departments, which have established a DOC from which they coordinate field units or crews, may coordinate single command incidents. DOCs coordinate with departmental representatives at the EOC. UC at major incidents coordinates directly with the Area Command at the EOC.

### 3.4.9 DOC versus EOC

Department Operations Centers (DOCs) are locations from which individual departments control their internal or tactical operations, when they experience a dramatic increase in service demand. DOCs may be regular command or control centers such as the Police Department Command Center or the Public Works Gillette Maintenance Center, or they may be an ad hoc center set up by departments to handle resource needs, personnel callback, altered business hours, etc.

Establishing a DOC does not replace activities at the EOC. DOCs allow for the coordination of department specific issues, personnel, and resources. The EOC's function is to provide **strategic** decision-making and support for major emergencies. In that respect the two centers, compliment one another and the establishment of a department's operations at the EOC doesn't diminish the need for creating a DOC. When considering staffing issues for a DOC and EOC operation, it is important that assigned personnel have the authority to make decisions on issues raised at the respective centers.

### 3.4.10 Executive Policy and Strategic Decision-making

The EOC will be the focus for strategic decision-making in incidents involving multiple sites or the area as a whole. In large-scale incidents, the Mayor will make strategic decisions including, but not limited to, government office closures, large-scale evacuations, curfews, emergency ordinances, evacuations, incident response priorities, external resource requests, and public

information releases. These will be made in consultation with the Area Command at the EOC.

In incidents involving single-site emergencies, the on-site IC will be the focus of strategic decision-making. The EOC will function in a support role.

#### **3.4.11 Communications and coordination between the EOC and Incident Commander**

The primary communication between the EOC and field should be with the IC, particularly concerning response policies, incident objectives, and resource priorities. In some large-scale emergencies or disasters, emergency operations with different objectives may be conducted at geographically separated scenes. In such situations, more than one incident management operation may be established. If this situation occurs, the allocation of resources to specific field operations will be coordinated through the EOC.

### **3.5 Activating the Emergency Operations Center**

EOC activation depends on a number of factors. However, it usually occurs when there is (or there is an anticipated) need for coordination of city (or outside) resources to an emergency or disaster. In addition to coordination during emergency situations, the EOC may be utilized for special event activities or coordination of inter-agency activities related to such events. The size of the activation can vary. Some can involve only personnel from the OEM who may respond to the EOC to monitor an impending situation. Others can involve a majority of City departments and outside support agencies.

In most cases the EMC makes the determination for EOC activation. However, the Mayor's Office, or any City department, may request activation should they determine there is a need to coordinate City services in response to an incident. The EMC will consult with the requesting person or agency to determine what departments (if any) should be called into the EOC. Consideration will also be given to events or situations that could be considered sensitive. In certain situations considered sensitive, access to the EOC may be restricted. The Coordinator, in consultation with the requesting entity and the Mayor's Office, will determine the level of restrictions.

When the EOC is fully activated, there may be representatives from the Disaster Management Committee (DMC) present. These include, but are not limited to, the Mayor, his/her executive office staff, EMC, Police Chief, Fire Chief, City Attorney, Director of Health and Human Services and Director of Public Works and Engineering. The purpose of the DMC is to provide advice and counsel to the Mayor and the EMC concerning the City's response and recovery operations. See **Tab 1** for a diagram showing the functional relationship of agencies and organizations that respond to the EOC.

### **3.6 Public Warning and Emergency Information**

Public information is a unified effort to inform, warn and advise the citizens during all the stages of an emergency, from onset through the recovery phase. The citizens are responsible for using that information to protect themselves and those for whom they are personally responsible. If the citizens of Houston are kept informed, they should be able to respond effectively to protect themselves and others.

### **3.6.1 Warning and Communications Systems**

The City of Houston utilizes a number of systems to provide emergency information to the news media and public. Information will be transmitted to the public via the news media in a clear, direct manner so that the citizens understand. Such information should include:

- What is wrong,
- What protective action they should take,
- Where they can get help, and
- When the situation will be remedied

The following is a listing of the types of systems used to make emergency notifications to the media and public.

#### **3.6.2.1 Media Alerting and Notification System (MANS)**

This is an Internet based rapid notification system designed to simultaneously notify numerous media outlets including print, radio and television. The Harris County Office of Emergency Management provides this system.

#### **3.6.2.2 Network Early Warning System (NEWS)**

The Network will provide an early warning system that has the capability of selectively having telephone calls placed to citizens warning them of dangerous situations (e.g., hazardous materials incidents or explosions) or potentially hazardous weather conditions. This system is being provided by the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network.

#### **3.6.2.3 Emergency Alert System (EAS)**

This is a broadcasters' relay system of critical information. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires broadcasters to participate in the EAS or to go off of the air during a national emergency. The OEM can contact the City's designated EAS activation station, KTRH, who activates the EAS alert tone. This subsequently opens special receivers at broadcast stations throughout a multi-county area. They can then tape and re-broadcast or broadcast the EAS message directly.

#### **3.6.2.4 Cable TV Override**



The OEM has the capability to override Cable Television providers serving the Houston area with an emergency voice message.

#### **3.6.2.5 Internet**

The OEM provides emergency condition information on the Emergency Management web page. The page includes links to updates for road closures, weather, school closures, other related information and links to other emergency management agencies. The site can be accessed from the OEM web page at [www.houstonoem.org](http://www.houstonoem.org).

#### **3.6.2.6 NOAA Weather Alert Radio**

The National Weather Service (NWS) operates a nationwide system of transmitters that broadcast weather information 24 hours a day. One feature of this system is that the NWS can transmit a special tone that activates specially equipped receivers throughout a multi-county area. The OEM can request that the NWS activate this system for emergency warnings not related to weather.

#### **3.6.2.7 Joint Information Center (JIC)**

The Public Information Officers (PIOs) of the agencies involved in an incident will coordinate their efforts through a JIC, either at the incident location or at the EOC, if activated. In emergencies, it is critical that all public information be accurate, complete and consistent. Through an integrated Joint Information Center, information among the various agencies and the EOC can be coordinated into unified media briefings.

#### **3.6.2.8 Door-To-Door Notification**

Emergency response personnel going door-to-door can notify the public. Although this is an effective means of notification, it is a labor-intensive and time-consuming process.

The IC will control on-site warning activities, using door-to-door notifications and emergency vehicle public announcement systems.

#### **3.6.2.9 Dynamic Message Signs**

These are the freeway message signs operated by the Texas Department of Transportation that are located along the major highways throughout the Houston region. They can be used during times of emergencies to provide motorist guidance and information.

#### **3.6.2.10 Highway Advisory Radio**

The Highway Advisory Radio system is a series of fixed site transmitters operated by the Texas Department of Transportation that are located in the Houston Metro Region. They can be used during times of emergencies to provide motorist guidance and information.

#### **3.6.2.11 EHCMA CAER Line**

This is a telephone call in system, provided by the East Harris County Manufactures Association (EHCMA) and utilized by industry, to provide individuals living in close proximity to petrochemical facilities with information on chemical releases or emergency conditions that are occurring at the facility and which may impact them. The information placed on the system is updated periodically by the respective facility during the course of the event. This system can be used by local jurisdictions.

#### **3.6.2.12 Other Public Warning and Emergency Information Resources**

Other warning or alerting resources available include:

- Issuance of information from the EOC through the City of Houston Municipal Channel.
- Use of Houston Police Department (HPD) and Houston Fire Department (HFD) vehicles with sirens and public address (PA) systems to alert citizens in the immediate vicinity of a hazard.

### **3.7 Departmental Responsibilities**

#### **3.7.1 General**

Below are activities that apply to all departments during the response phase of an emergency and/or disaster.

- Activating internal emergency plans, including supplies, equipment and facilities according to established criteria and notifying the EOC/OEM when these plans are activated.
- Reviewing security procedures and implementing enhancements as needed based upon threats or incidents.
- Advising the EOC/OEM when the department cannot carry out its roles or responsibilities as described in this plan and its annexes.
- Sending a departmental representative to the EOC, when requested by the OEM, to provide input to and to coordinate with other departments and agencies.

- Providing regular status reports to the EOC on department resources, activities, and emergency conditions about which the department has information.
- Coordinating with the EOC in establishing priorities for restoring services after outages.
- Coordinating all public information activities with the City's Public Information Officer and the Public Information section at the EOC.
- Providing necessary administrative and technical support to the department's operational sections or divisions.
- Keeping accurate and complete records of costs of responding to the emergency, such as personnel costs (regular and overtime), equipment, supplies, and services. These records will be used for reporting to City management and may also be required to apply for Federal assistance.
- Maintaining lists and descriptions of department facilities and equipment that are damaged by the emergency.

### **3.7.2 Tracking of Costs Associated with a Disaster**

Early and accurate documentation of costs and damage estimates are essential to the application for public assistance. That is why it is critical for departments to keep track of costs during the early stages of any disaster. There are also a number of rules and regulations that apply to what may be eligible for reimbursement.

For any major emergency or disaster it is the responsibility of each department to track and monitor all costs related to their department's response and recovery operations.

### **3.7.3 Record Keeping for Emergency Operations**

The OEM will maintain an incident log for any major emergency and/or disaster. In addition, individual departments should maintain a log of major decisions, logistical deployments and other major actions related to their respective departments.

During EOC activation, message forms should be used for resource requests, phone messages and other correspondence requiring receipt of documentation. Instructions on use of these and other forms and equipment are available at the EOC and from the OEM.

### **3.7.4 Reports**

Required reports will be submitted to the appropriate authorities in accordance with the Basic Plan and individual annexes.

### **3.7.5 Specific Responsibilities**

In addition to general responsibilities, each department has specific responsibilities that are outlined in Appendix A of this document.

### **3.8 Requesting Outside Assistance**

The City's resources constitute the first line of response and relief during the onset and immediate aftermath of a major emergency and/or disaster. The City will handle the emergency needs until its resources become or are projected to become inadequate to cope with the situation. If the City's resources prove to be inadequate, the City will request aid from outside resources. Such outside aid may come from a variety of resources, including one or more of the following.

#### **3.8.1 Mutual Aid Agreements**

The City supplements its resources in disaster planning by having mutual aid agreements (also called interlocal agreements), with neighboring jurisdictions, such as neighboring cities, in which the parties agree to assist each other in disasters. For example, the HFD has mutual aid agreements with other neighboring fire departments.

Mutual aid agreements are legal arrangements between governments or organizations, either public or private, for reciprocal aid and assistance during emergency situations where the resources of a single jurisdiction or organization are insufficient or inappropriate for the tasks that must be performed to control the situation. These documents may typically include factors such as:

- Authority to operate in another jurisdiction
- Provision of resources and services
- Compensation for workers
- Clarification of legal liability
- Specification of who will manage operations involving mutual aid
- Specification of who will declare states of disaster
- Specification of who will administer resources received from third parties
- Specification of who will provide benefits to those injured or killed while rendering aid

In an emergency or disaster, departments typically make direct contact with entities they have mutual aid agreements with, rather than going through the EOC to request aid. The EOC/OEM will be advised of such requests, especially if there is a cost associated responding agency.

#### **3.8.2 Private Relief Organizations**

Another source of outside assistance is private relief organizations, such as the ARC, the SA, other charitable organizations, civic and service organizations, and

church groups. These organizations may assist in many ways including the distribution of food, medicine, and supplies; the provision of emergency shelter; and the restoration of community services.

The ARC, which operates under a Congressional Charter, provides grants and other types of assistance to individuals and families affected by disasters. They can also provide significant individual assistance in the aftermath of a major disaster.

In an emergency, many departments may need assistance from the same private relief organizations. Even though departments may have an on-going, day-to-day relationship with these private relief organizations, in an emergency or disaster, departments must go through the EOC to request aid. The EOC can then coordinate requests for assistance and avoid confusion and delays.

### **3.8.3 State Assistance**

In an emergency, when local resources are not sufficient to cope with the disaster or emergency, the EOC will contact the Mayor, who will formally request assistance from the Texas Department of Public Safety's Disaster District Chairperson. Disaster Districts are regional state emergency management areas, mandated by the Executive Order of the Governor, whose boundaries parallel those of the Texas Department of Public Safety Highway Patrol Districts and Sub-Districts. Houston is located in District 2A. The Disaster District consists of a Commander (the local Highway Patrol captain or command lieutenant) and representatives of the state agencies and volunteer groups represented on the State Emergency Management Council with resources in the district. The Commander, supported by committee members, is responsible for identifying, coordinating the use of, committing, and directing state resources within the district to respond to emergencies.

If the request is beyond the capabilities of the local Disaster District, the Disaster District Commander will forward the request to the State Emergency Management Council, which has even more resources at its command. The State Emergency Management Council reports directly to the Governor. It is composed of key representatives from many State agencies and other public and private organizations. The Director of the Department of Public Safety chairs the State Emergency Management Council. The council conducts its activities in the State Emergency Operations Center [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

If a city department or agency determines that outside assistance is going to be required, that department or agency should contact the EOC. In order to receive the needed assistance in a timely manner, departments and agencies must be aware of their available resources, anticipate the future resource requirements of the situation, and notify the EOC of the specific needs as quickly as possible.

### **3.8.4 Federal Assistance**

If the situation is beyond the capabilities of the State, the Governor will request that the President declare the City of Houston and Harris County a major disaster area and make available the resources provided for under Public Law 93-288, as amended by the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988.

The FEMA coordinates the provision of Federal assistance. Federal assistance can come either in the form of resources (manpower and equipment) or money for either affected citizens, municipalities, or both. Monetary reimbursement usually comes in the form of a *disaster declaration*. A disaster declaration is covered in the next section. Resource requests must be channeled through the state and usually come after local and state resources are either exhausted or not available.

### **3.8.5 Requesting State and Federal Assistance**

The OEM, through the EOC, serves as the focal point for requesting State and Federal assistance. The sequence of events that will occur if the City needs to request State or Federal assistance is as follows.

- 1 OEM prepares the appropriate request for assistance for the Mayor's signature including: a brief report detailing the scope of damage, approximate cost estimate of public and private property loss; and a description of the exact type of assistance needed.
- 2 The Mayor signs the declaration.
- 3 The Mayor, or OEM on behalf of the Mayor, contacts the Department of Public Safety, Disaster District Office.
- 4 The Department of Public Safety, Disaster District Office contacts the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (DEM), Department of Public Safety, Austin, Texas.
- 5 DEM contacts the Governor's Office, which either authorizes State assistance or requests Federal assistance, as needed.

If the OEM is unable to contact the DPS, Disaster District Office, OEM may contact the Governor's Division of Emergency Management directly. An initial request of this nature may be transmitted via telephone, radio or special messenger.

### **3.8.6 Presidential Major Disaster Declaration**

A major disaster that results in significant loss of lives or property can lead to a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration. Funding for such a declaration comes from the President's Disaster Relief Fund, which is managed by FEMA, and disaster aid programs of other participating agencies.

A Presidential Major Disaster Declaration puts into motion long-term federal recovery programs, some of which are matched by state programs, and designed to help disaster victims, businesses and local governments.

It is important that all City departments have at least an understanding of the disaster declaration process, because a declaration can open the door to federal aid for public entities that are either impacted or engaged in activities directly related to the declared disaster. Federal money obtained through public assistance can be used to restore selected public facilities and infrastructure. Manpower and material costs incurred by City departments may also be eligible for reimbursement.

To receive public assistance, the City must be able to furnish substantial documentation of damages, materials, and manpower used during the course of the event. Therefore, it is critical that steps be taken by individual departments to document applicable information on their activities during the course of the emergency. With the proper documentation, a disaster declaration can provide substantial assistance towards defraying disaster-related costs incurred by local governments. The following provides a general description of the declaration process and the impact it can have on both City government and its citizens.

#### **3.8.6.1 Steps Towards Obtaining a Major Disaster Declaration**

The following outlines the steps in obtaining a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

- 1** Local government responds, supplemented by neighboring communities and volunteer agencies. If overwhelmed, local government turns to the state for assistance. The Mayor then signs a Local State of Disaster, which is then forwarded to the state.
- 2** The state responds with state resources, such as the National Guard and State agencies. The local government conducts a preliminary damage assessment with assistance from state and volunteer organizations, to determine losses and recovery needs. It is critical that the preliminary survey be conducted within a few hours of the occurrence of a disaster or while the full scope and impact of the damages is still evident.
- 3** The Governor, based on the damage assessment and an agreement to commit state funds and resources to the long-term recovery, requests a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration.
- 4** FEMA evaluates the request and recommends action to the White House based on the disaster, the local community and the state's ability to recover.
- 5** The President either approves the request or informs FEMA the Governor's request has been denied. This decision process could take a few hours or several weeks depending on the nature of the disaster.

#### **3.8.6.2 Prerequisites for Obtaining Federal Assistance**

The Federal government's assessment of the impact of a disaster on the City and its determination of the type and amount of assistance it will provide will be based on a number of considerations, including:

- The total geographical area affected, the approximate number of fatalities and injured persons
- The extent and nature of damages to public buildings, utilities, facilities, streets, bridges and other related structures
- The extent and nature of damages to private, non-profit, educational, and medical care facilities
- The extent and nature of damages to private property, private residences and businesses
- The number of families requiring temporary shelter and housing
- The number of persons unemployed as a result of the disaster
- The extent of the loss of communications, transportation facilities and other essential public services
- The capacity of the City's resources and efforts to meet its own recovery needs
- The overall impact on the local economy and estimated amount of uninsured losses

### 3.8.6.3 Types of Federal Assistance

A ***Presidential Declaration of Major Disaster*** can authorize two major types of federal assistance.

#### **Individual Assistance**

##### **Definition**

Individual Assistance is assistance to private individuals and includes emergency sheltering, feeding and clothing. It also includes temporary housing, house mortgage or rent assistance, disaster loans, federal income tax assistance, legal aid services, job placement, unemployment benefits, home repair, post-disaster trauma counseling, and disaster food stamps.

##### **Process**

Once a Presidential Disaster Declaration is made, individuals must apply for assistance from the various programs for which they qualify. This is usually done either over the phone (teleregistration) or through Disaster Recovery Centers that are established in affected communities. After the application is taken, the damaged property is inspected to verify the loss. If approved, an applicant will soon receive a check for rental assistance or a grant. Loan applications require more information and approval may take several weeks after application. The deadline for most individual assistance programs is 60 days following the President's major disaster declaration.



Audits are done later to ensure that aid went to only those who were eligible and that disaster aid funds were used only for their intended purposes. These federal program funds cannot duplicate assistance provided by other sources such as insurance.

## **Public Assistance**

### **Definition**

Public Assistance supplements the resources of City government to restore public facilities and services and to alleviate the economic impact of a disaster. It includes reimbursement for the costs of debris removal and the costs of repair, restoration, or replacement of uninsured public property, facilities, utilities, or streets damaged by a disaster. Public Assistance can also recoup material and personnel (salary) costs that are documented as being directly related to the disaster for which aid is being sought.

### **Process**

The Public Assistance process begins after the Presidential Disaster Declaration. Once Individual Assistance for a disaster has been approved, local municipalities may submit an application for Public Assistance provided it meets certain minimum damage thresholds set by the Federal Government. These thresholds change from year-to-year. Public entities have thirty (30) days from the date of the declaration to submit their application for Public Assistance. Once an application has been approved, specific grants are then made based on individual projects and/or costs incurred as a result of the disaster. Public Assistance can provide up to 75% of costs incurred in:

- Debris Removal
- Emergency Protective Measures, which covers those activities taken by a community immediately before, during, or following a specific disaster that either:
  - 1 Eliminate or reduce an immediate threat to life, public health, or safety; or
  - 2 Eliminate or reduce an immediate hazard that threatens significant damage to improved public health or private property.
- Overtime costs incurred by a department directly related to the disaster response.
- Permanent Restoration of Municipal Facilities and Infrastructure, which includes:
  - 1 Roads and bridges.
  - 2 Water control facilities.
  - 3 Utilities.
  - 4 Municipal parks, buildings, and selected equipment.

Further details may be obtained from the OEM.

**Note:** Individual Assistance and Public Assistance require separate applications and have separate minimum damage assessment thresholds that must be met before the application can be considered. *Public Assistance grants **will not be considered unless an Individual Assistance grant is applied for and approved first.***

#### 3.8.6.4 Disaster Assistance Centers

A Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) is a centralized location where individuals/families affected by a disaster can go to obtain information on disaster recovery assistance programs from various Federal, State, and local agencies as well as voluntary organizations. The number and type of agencies represented may vary depending on the type of disaster. DRCs assist individuals with processing assistance applications, serve as a forum for State and local agencies' disaster programs, assist families and businesses to fill out a Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster loan application, and can get answers to other questions. They can also provide reconstruction and mitigation information. Federal agencies often are represented in DRCs to offer and explain programs that are tailored to meet disaster victims' and service providers' needs (e.g., HUD's section 203(k) mortgage assistance programs for disaster victims). Trained staff can also provide disaster mental health services.

In a major disaster with significant impact, the establishment of the formal recovery processes and implementation of the other agencies' recovery programs should be well planned and coordinated, and should start as early as practicable.

### 3.9 Post-Incident Responsibilities

#### 3.9.1 Reviews

One of the aspects of any exercise or actual incident is a post incident review. Such a review offers an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of actions taken and procedures used.

The purpose of post-incident review is to:

- 1 Determine what procedures and actions worked.
- 2 Determine what procedures and actions didn't work.
- 3 Discuss solutions or schedule future meetings to work through identified problems.

The OEM will be responsible for the scheduling of post incident reviews where it is deemed that such a review offers an opportunity for enhancing the City's response in future incidents.

## **4.0 LIST OF TABS**

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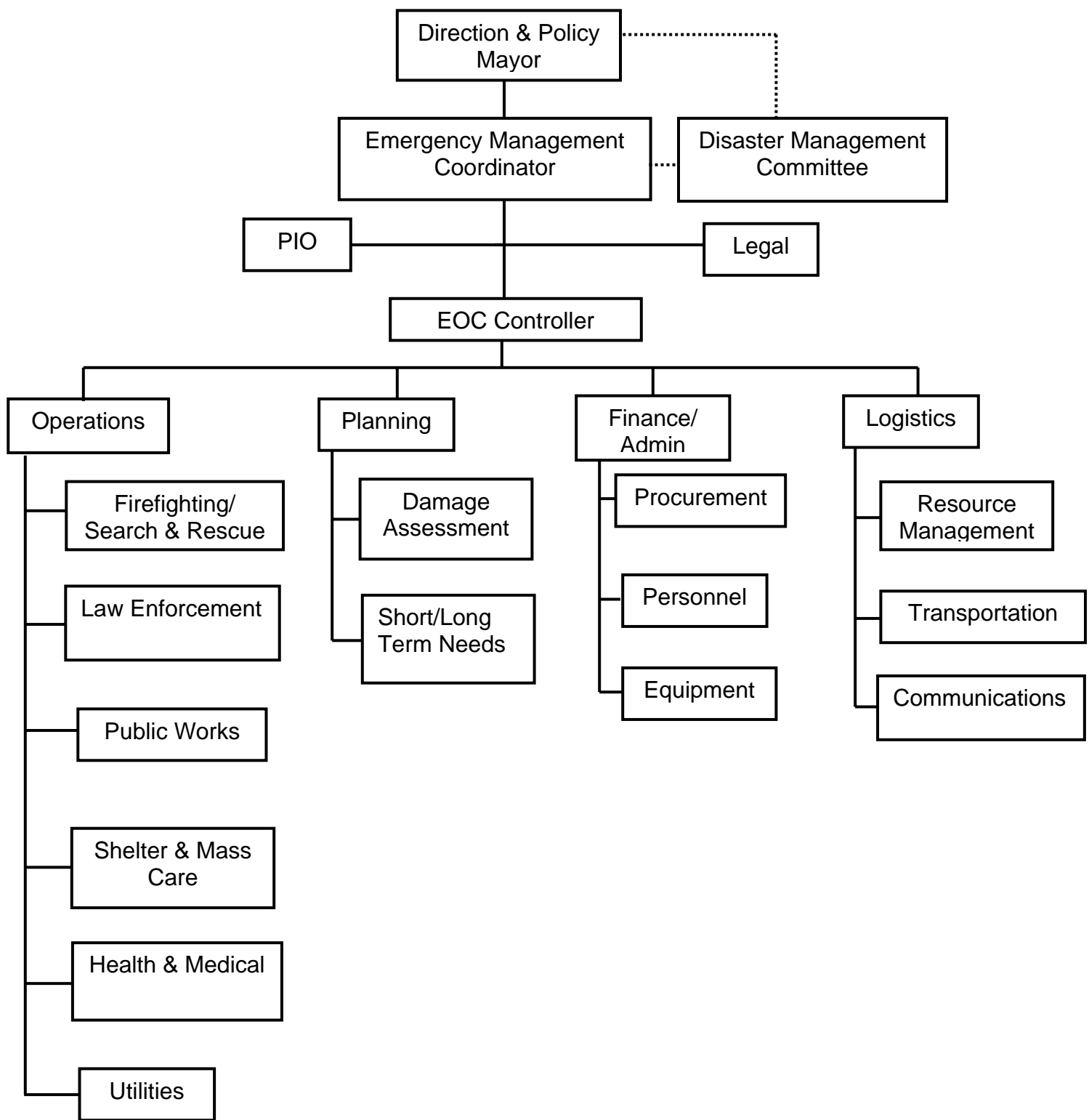
**Tab 1 - EOC Organization Diagram**

**Tab 2 - Emergency Functional Responsibilities**

**Tab 3 - Annex Assignments**

**Tab 4 - Agreements and Contracts**

Tab 1 - EOC Organization Diagram

**ORGANIZATION FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**

Tab 2 - Emergency Functional Responsibilities

	WARNING	COMMUNICATIONS	SHELTER & MASS CARE	RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION	EVACUATION	FIREFIGHTING & RESCUE	LAW ENFORCEMENT	HEALTH & MEDICAL	EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION	RECOVERY	PUBLIC WORKS & ENGINEERING	UTILITIES	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	DIRECTION & CONTROL	HUMAN SERVICES	HAZARD MITIGATION	HAZMAT & OIL SPILL RESPONSE	TRANSPORTATION	DONATIONS MANAGEMENT	LEGAL	TERRORIST INCIDENT RESPONSE	DEBRIS MANAGEMENT
ADVENTIST COMMUNITY SVCS.															S				P			
AMERICAN RED CROSS			P		S								S	S	S			S	S		S	
BUILDING SERVICES										S		S										S
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	P	P	C	C	S	C	C	C	P	C	C	C	S	P	C	P	C	S	C	C	C	C
FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION													S					S				
FIRE	S	S	S	S	S	P				S			S	S	S		P				C	
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES			S	P	S			P		S			S	S	P		S				C	
HUMAN RESOURCES													P									
LEGAL													S			S				P		
MAYOR	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
METRO			S		S								S		S			P			S	
PARKS & RECREATION			S																			S
PLANNING &										P												
POLICE	S	S	S	S	P	S	P			S			S	S	S	S		S			P	
PUBLIC WORKS & ENG.		S	S	S	S	S	S			S	P	S	S	S		S		S			S	S
SALVATION ARMY			S							S					S				S			
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT														S								P
UTILITIES										S		P	S	S								

P – Indicates primary responsibility

S – Indicates support responsibility

C - Indicates coordination responsibility

**Tab 3 - Annex Assignments****FUNCTIONAL ANNEXES****ASSIGNMENT**

ESF #1 TRANSPORTATION (ANNEX S) .....	METRO
ESF #2 COMMUNICATIONS (ANNEX B) .....	Office of Emergency Management
ESF # 3 PUBLIC WORKS & ENGINEERING (ANNEX K) .....	PW & E Department
ESF # 4 FIREFIGHTING (ANNEX F) .....	Fire Department
ESF # 5 DIRECTION AND CONTROL (ANNEX N) ...	Office of Emergency Management
ESF # 6 SHELTER AND MASS CARE (ANNEX C) .....	American Red Cross
ESF # 7 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (ANNEX M) .....	Human Resources Department
ESF # 8 HEALTH AND MEDICAL (ANNEX H) .	Health and Human Services Department
ESF # 9 SEARCH AND RESCUE (ANNEX R) SEE ESF # 4 .....	Fire Department
ESF # 10 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (ANNEX Q) .....	Fire Department
ESF # 11 FOOD – SEE ESF # 6 .....	American Red Cross
ESF # 12 UTILITIES (ANNEX L) .....	Office of Emergency Management

**SUPPORTING ANNEXES**

DEBRIS MANAGEMENT (ANNEX W) .....	Solid Waste Management Department
DONATIONS MANAGEMENT (ANNEX T) .....	Adventist Community Services
EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION (ANNEX I)....	Office of Emergency Management
EVACUATION (ANNEX E) .....	Police Department
HAZARD MITIGATION (ANNEX P) .....	Office of Emergency Management
HUMAN SERVICES (ANNEX O) .....	Health and Human Services Department
LAW ENFORCEMENT (ANNEX G) .....	Police Department
LEGAL (ANNEX U) .....	Legal Department
RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION (ANNEX D)....	Health and Human Services Department
RECOVERY (ANNEX J) .....	Planning & Development Department
TERRORIST INCIDENT RESPONSE (ANNEX V) .....	Police Department
WARNING (ANNEX A) .....	Office of Emergency Management

**Tab 4 - Agreements and Contracts**

Copies of inter local agreements and contracts pertaining to assistance received or to be provided during an emergency and/or disaster are on file with the City Secretary. The OEM maintains a listing of such agreements.

## **5.0 List of Appendices**

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**Appendix A: Specific Department Response Requirements**

**Appendix B: Distribution List**



# **APPENDIX A**

## **SPECIFIC DEPARTMENT RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS**

## **Aviation Department**

### **Function**

Develops, maintains, exercises, and implements emergency plans for each airport meeting Federal Aviation Administration requirements.

Activates the Aviation emergency plan when an aviation accident or potential accident arises. Notifies the OEM/EOC when the plan is activated.

Provides equipment to assist in response operations, when requested.

Coordinates with the Public Information section of the EOC, if activated, to keep the news media informed.

## **Convention and Entertainment Facilities Department**

### **Function**

When requested and to the extent of availability, provide facilities for mass sheltering and care of victims in coordination with the ARC and the EOC.

If needed, provide facilities to serve as disaster assistance centers or a media information center, in coordination with the EOC.

Support emergency requests from the EOC for chairs, tables, telephones, and other supplies.

## **Building Services Department**

### **Function**

Assures that critical BSD managed buildings and facilities remain operable during emergencies.

Assesses damages to City-owned buildings and facilities. The damage assessment report will be provided to the OEM.

Maintains and fuels backup generators at City-owned buildings and facilities.

Maintains the Houston Emergency Center (HEC) facility [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Identifies and makes arrangements for acquiring lease space for City departments that have to relocate as a result of damages to their primary location

Provides architectural and project management services for the restoration or reconstruction of damaged City-owned facilities.

Assist in mitigation planning and the development of hazard mitigation strategy.

## **Finance and Administration Department**

### **Function**

Develops, maintains, and implements procedures for emergency payroll processing.

Develops, maintains, and implements procedures for making emergency purchases.

Assesses the financial impact of emergencies on the City's budget, and identifies funding sources for emergency response.

Develops, maintains, and implements procedures for accepting and reallocating Federal public disaster assistance funds to City departments.

Coordinates all financial, accounting, and purchasing reporting functions related to the disaster.

The Risk Management Division administers the City's insurance coverage, collects loss reports from affected departments, and files claims in coordination with the OEM.

Evaluates the long-term economic impact of emergencies on the City's tax base.

## Fire Department

### Function

Provides for the response and mitigation of all Fire and Medical emergencies that originate within the corporate limits of the City delivering: Fire Suppression, Technical Rescue Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Hazardous Materials Response, Aircraft Rescue Operations, WMD Response, Severe Weather and Tropical Storm Operations, Fire Prevention and Investigation functions..

Maintains and operates communications systems, vehicle maintenance operations, refueling stations, warehouse and supply operations and other logistical functions to support the Department's operations.

Develops, maintains, and implements Departmental plans, policies, procedures and guidelines related to training and operational methods for the appropriate response to various types of emergencies including:

- Mass Casualty incidents

Administers medical rescue and evacuation, triage, treatment and transport operations and updates the EOC of incident status and expected patient flow, as needed.

Utilizes other area EMS agencies and local/regional private ambulance companies for ground ambulance assistance, when needed.

- Hazardous Materials incidents

Administers special procedures for managing patients contaminated by hazardous chemicals, radiological materials or biological agents.

Responds and mitigates hazardous materials incidents and provides advice to the Incident Command on effective alternatives for cleanup and spill management.

- WMD Response

Administers EMS, Fire, Rescue and Multi-agency operations for the management and mitigation of incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.

- Severe Weather and Tropical Storm incidents

Provides observations of stream, bayou, street and bridge conditions to the EOC, when requested.

Provides information to the Public Information section of the EOC to convey public warnings, if necessary.

- Rescue Operations

Performs technical rescue and extraction operations including confined space, high angle, entrapments, hazardous environments, aircraft and swift water.

## **Health & Human Services Department**

### **Function**

Coordinates Public Health response and resources such as disease surveillance, pharmaceuticals, and laboratory services with State and Federal public health agencies.

Identifies conditions that have the potential for causing long-term or widespread health problems.

Develops and enforces disease control, emergency health and sanitation standards.

Responds to domestic/wild animal situations which are posing a public health threat during an emergency event. During the recovery process, responds to situations where domestic animals are running loose, abandoned (or otherwise made homeless), sick or injured.

Inspects food and water supplies for possible contamination as a result of emergency conditions.

Provides comprehensive information to the public either associated with, or as a result of, a health emergency.

Coordinates the assessment of the health risks associated with air, water, or land contamination, the environmental impact of emergency conditions, and coordinates with State and Federal environmental agencies.

Coordinates with City, State, and Federal agencies in response to hazardous materials incidents affecting surface or ground water resources.

Works with community agencies in providing public health, medical, mental health and social services.

Makes Multi-Service Centers available to be used as Cooling Centers, when requested by the OEM, in response to the activation of the City's Heat Emergency Plan.

Provides and coordinates mass prophylaxis and immunization activities.

Provides Level B and C laboratory support.

## **Housing and Community Development Department**

### **Function**

Provide planning and support for recovery operations related to housing repair following a major disaster or emergency.

Coordinates Individual Assistance support to community for short and long term recovery.



## **Human Resources Department**

### **Function**

Advises City management on the impact of personnel issues related to early employee releases, suspension of non-essential work activities, and altered work assignments due to emergency conditions.

Coordinates the temporary reassignment of City employees to assist the EOC and other departments in emergencies.

Ensure availability of disaster mental health provisions for City employees in need of such services.

## **Information Technology Department**

### **Function**

Coordinates with the EOC to establish priorities for restoration of telecommunication and computer services during emergency conditions.

Supports, maintains, repairs, and restores software applications, hardware, and telecommunications for mainframe, micro- and mini-computer systems, in accordance with the priorities established above.

Provides maintenance and support for the critical business functions that rely upon the central mainframe computer, when the City is affected by emergency conditions. This may necessitate operation from a remote computer "hotsite".

Coordinates the installation of telephone and computer systems in special field locations such as command posts and emergency public assistance centers.

Provides user support and "Help Desk" services to meet the emergency needs of other departments.

## **Legal Department**

### **Function**

Reviews current Local, State, and Federal legislation and regulations relating to emergency management and emergency powers.

Provides legal advice to the Mayor and OEM concerning the declaration of a Local State of Disaster.

Recommends and prepares emergency ordinances or orders to implement special powers that may be required during an emergency.

Reviews drafts of emergency proclamations and emergency ordinances prepared by the OEM.

## **Library Department**

### **Function**

Distributes emergency preparedness public education materials to citizens who visit the libraries.

Provide public Internet stations that may serve as communications points for City staff and the public.

Branch libraries, assuming they have electric power service, serve as dissemination points for emergency public information to citizens in an emergency, particularly during long-term power outages when radio and television may not reach some segments of the community.

Make libraries available to be used as Cooling Centers, when requested by the OEM, in response to the activation of the City's Heat Emergency Plan.

The Central and Regional libraries serve as repository sites for public reference copies of the City's EMP.

## **Mayor's Communications Office**

### **Function**

The Mayor's Communications Office will function as the City's PIO during emergencies and/or disasters.

The PIO or designee coordinates all public information activities from major departments and agencies involved in emergency response during the activation of the EOC.

While in the EOC, the PIO or designee ensures that appropriate staffing levels are maintained to operate a Joint Information Center (JIC), if necessary. This Center may also be set up near the emergency site during extended emergencies. The purpose of the JIC is to support media representatives and coordinate all public information activities related to the emergency response. All media inquiries, requests for interviews, news statements and outgoing information are coordinated with the PIO or designee. This is done, regardless of whether an official JIC is established or not.

The PIO or designee will coordinate regular briefings and/or news conferences, ensuring that the appropriate personnel are available to make comments and answer questions for news media representatives during emergency situations.

The PIO or designee will assist the EOC in coordinating the use of the 311 Houston Service Helpline to help answer emergency-related questions.

## **Planning and Development Department**

### **Function**

Utilize the City's GIS and Land-use information to assist in identifying potential facilities to be utilized for long-term emergency housing.

Provide GIS support to the OEM and the EOC.

Provide personnel to assist in the damage assessment process.

If necessary, work with Harris County Appraisal District to obtain the value of damaged homes and businesses for purposes of developing an area-wide damage assessment after an emergency.

Assist in mitigation planning and the development of hazard mitigation strategy.

## **Parks & Recreation Department**

### **Function**

Physical inspection of all department facilities to determine if there are any hazardous/life threatening conditions.

Support Public Works & Engineering in the removal of trees and fallen debris from public streets and right-of-ways, and in or around those structures where public safety or health is endangered.

Provide facilities, as required for evacuees, at the request of the OEM or the EOC, if activated. Assist the ARC in managing recreation facilities that are being used as shelters.

Make recreation centers available to be used as Cooling Centers when requested by the OEM, in response to the activation of the City's Heat Emergency Plan.

Provide assistance, as required, to the Solid Waste Department in implementing the Debris Management Plan.

Assists the Fire Department with high water evacuations, by providing vehicles and personnel, when requested.

## **Police Department**

### **Function**

Establishes plans, procedures and related training for response to various types of emergencies including but not limited to the protection of life, property and maintenance of public order, tactical operations, mass evacuations, traffic control, severe weather and tropical storms.

Receives notification of State and Federal emergencies through the Texas Department of Public Safety and other sources, provides this information to other emergency services including the OEM.

Provides an on-scene commander and participates in the Incident Command Post in collaboration with other primary response agencies.

Controls access by both pedestrians and vehicles to the disaster or hazardous area, where appropriate, in coordination with the Fire Department and other jurisdictional agencies.

Provides observations of bayou, street and bridge conditions to the EOC, as requested.

Conducts evacuation of the affected area including warning residents, coordinating transportation, identifying mass transportation collection points, establishing evacuation routes, and securing the evacuation zone.

Provides enhanced security to City critical facilities depending on the nature of the emergency.

Coordinates with the Public Information Officer at the EOC to ensure that all information including public warnings and public information are consistent, accurate and timely.

Conducts aerial damage assessment and reconnaissance in coordination with the OEM and the EOC.

Maintains and operates vehicle maintenance facilities, vehicle refueling stations, and mobile vehicle repair crews in support of departmental operations during emergencies.



## **Public Works and Engineering Department**

### **Function**

Barricades streets in high-risk or disaster-secured areas, and communicates street closing, street condition, and street re-opening information to the EOC.

Participates in debris removal programs in conjunction with the Solid Waste Department following any major emergency. Removes debris from storm drains where public safety is endangered.

Repairs or replaces traffic signals and traffic signs damaged or destroyed by the disaster.

Engages in activities to assist the Police Department in altering signal control during special conditions or major evacuations.

Protects, operates, and maintains water and wastewater systems during emergency conditions.

Restores sewage collection and treatment systems that may be affected by emergency conditions.

Coordinates with the Fire Department to ensure that an adequate water supply and adequate water pressure is available for fire suppression.

Provides information and advice to the EOC on conditions that may compromise water distribution systems and water quality control measures.

Makes recommendations on emergency procedures for conservation and rationing of water.

Makes arrangements for providing and distributing alternative potable water supplies during emergency conditions.

Provides heavy equipment and diking materials to support the Fire Department's response to hazardous materials incidents as requested.

Assists the Fire Department with confined space rescues as requested.

Assists in determining the extent of damage to City facilities, streets, and right-of-ways.

Maintains and operates vehicle maintenance facilities, vehicle refueling stations, and mobile vehicle repair crews in support of departmental operations in emergencies.

Assists the Fire Department with high water evacuations by providing vehicles and personnel, when requested.

Maintains City's 800 Mhz trunked radio system.

Assist in mitigation planning and the development of hazard mitigation strategy.

## **Solid Waste Management Department**

### **Function**

Manages any large-scale debris removal program following a major emergency. This includes activation of the City's Debris Removal Plan and supporting operations.

Continues to provide normal trash pickup service as soon as possible following a major emergency.

Reviews requirements for roadside trash pickup, amending the amounts, collection rules, and types of debris collected as necessary during recovery operations.

Coordinates with the Public Information Officer of the EOC to inform the public for appropriate methods for disposing of debris.

Assists the Fire Department with high water evacuations by providing vehicles and personnel, when requested.

## **Harris County Agencies**

The following section lists certain emergency functions for which the City of Houston relies on Harris County agencies.

### **Harris County Medical Examiner**

- Investigates incidents with fatalities to determine the cause of death for each fatality. Conducts autopsies, if necessary.
- Protects the remains of fatalities and, when approved by the appropriate party, arranges to have them removed from the site of the incident.
- Identifies fatality victims.
- Notifies the next-of-kin of fatalities.
- Sets up and manages a temporary morgue, if necessary.

### **Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO)**

- Carries out commitments of mentally ill persons, if necessary.
- Provides law enforcement support to the HPD, when requested.
- Sends one or more representatives to the EOC, as needed.

### **Harris County Office of Emergency Management**

- Coordinates requests from the City for assistance from other Harris County agencies.
- Coordinates the countywide damage assessment, if a countywide disaster is declared.
- Sends one or more representatives to the EOC, as needed.
- Advises the OEM on projected flooding conditions.
- Maintains emergency flood forecast system and watershed map depicting all creeks, field gauges, and flood-prone areas.
- Operates and maintains the Flood Warning System.

### **Harris County Flood Control District**

- Develops and maintains computer models to perform flood forecasting based on past and predicted rainfall, creek flow and physical characteristics of watersheds.

### **Harris County Appraisal District**

Assists during damage assessment operations by providing information on the value of damaged property, estimated reconstruction costs, and other related information to the OEM and the EOC.

## Other Agencies

The following section lists general and specific responsibilities for agencies, other than City departments, who respond to emergencies that affect Houston.

### Houston Independent School District (HISD)

The Houston Independent School District is not a City of Houston Department or agent, and as such coordinates operations and provides assistance in accordance with a mutual understanding between the City of Houston and HISD.

- Develops, maintains, and implements an emergency plan for internal use, coordinated with the OEM as required.
- Evacuates students and staff from threatened HISD facilities and provides transportation for them to an alternate site shelter, in accordance with their existing plan.
- Notifies the EOC of HISD school evacuations or early school closures.
- Provides information to the news media about HISD school evacuations or early school closures, including specific information telling parents when and where to pick up their children.
- Coordinates with the EOC on the provision of school buses and drivers to assist in evacuations with EOC during major emergencies and/or disasters.
- Coordinates on the provision of facilities and necessary support for sheltering evacuees when requested by the EOC or ARC.
- Sends a representative to the EOC, if requested.

### American Red Cross (ARC)

The ARC provides assistance according to the Statement of Understanding between the City of Houston and the Greater Houston Area Chapter of the ARC. If the emergency meets the conditions specified by ARC's charter guidelines, the ARC:

- Establishes a disaster welfare inquiry program to manage an influx of calls from friends and families requesting information about the welfare of individuals possibly involved in the emergency.
- Manages and operates appropriate congregate shelters, first aid stations, fixed and mobile feeding and other mass-care support activities.
- Assists in the coordination of the activities of voluntary agencies and relief groups.

- Collects private property damage assessment information within the disaster area. Provides this information to the EOC.
- Assists disaster victims in identification of resources available to meet their short- and long-term disaster needs.
- Sends a representative to the EOC, if requested.

### **Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO)**

METRO is not a City of Houston department or agent, and as such, coordinates operations and provides assistance in accordance with Annex S of the Emergency Management Plan

- Provides vehicles and drivers to transport persons from evacuated emergency areas when requested by the EOC.
- Provides vehicles and drivers to assist the HPD HFD during emergency operations, when requested
- Provides vehicles and drivers to transport ambulatory patients from mass casualty events to area medical facilities.
- Provides information to the EOC about dangerous street conditions due to icing, high water, debris, or other hazards.
- Sends a representative to the EOC, if requested.

### **Texas Department of Transportation**

The Texas Department of Transportation makes available their Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and Highway Advisory Radio System to assist in providing motorist guidance and information to evacuates who are moving inland as a result of tropical weather in the Gulf of Mexico. DMS are also used to provide tornado warnings, Amber Plan alerts, Ozone alerts and other emergency information to the public.

### **Amateur Radio**

There are two amateur radio organizations that assist the City of Houston during times of emergencies and/or disasters. They are the **Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES)** and **Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES)**. These organizations provide:

- Direct support to the OEM, the EOC and field operations through the establishment and management of amateur radio communication networks.

### **Salvation Army (SA)**

The SA provides logistical support that includes:

- Emergency assistance by way of mass and mobile feeding, counseling, missing person services, and medical assistance.
- Temporary shelter facilities.
- The warehousing and distribution of donated good including food clothing, and household items.
- Provides referrals to government and private agencies for special services.

### **Adventists Community Services**

- Provides leadership to the Donations Management Program.



# **Appendix B**

## **Distribution List**

## Distribution List

Jurisdiction/Agency	Emerg. Mgmt. Plan	Annexes
Mayor's Office	5	All
Council Members	14	
Aviation Department	5	J,M,N
Building Services	2	J,M
City Secretary	1	All
Convention & Entertainment	7	J,M
Office of Emergency Management	6	All
Finance and Administration	2	J,M
Fire Department	2	A,B,C,D,E,F,J M,N,Q,R,V
Health & Human Services Department	1	C,D,E,H,J,M,N O,V
Housing and Community Development	1	J
Human Resources Department	1	M
Legal Department	2	N,U
Library Department	6	
Municipal Court - Administrative	1	M
Municipal Court - Judicial	1	M
Parks and Recreation Department	1	J,K,M,N,W
Planning and Development	2	J,M,N,W
Police Department	5	A,B,C,D,E,F,G J,M,N,Q,S,V
Public Works & Engineering Dept.	2	B,C,E,F,J,K,L M,N,R,S,W
Solid Waste Management	3	J,K,M,N,W
9-1-1	1	
American Red Cross	1	C,N,O,Q,S,T
Harris County Emergency Management	1	
Houston Independent School District	1	
METRO	1	E,S
NASA	1	
National Weather Service	1	A,N
CenterPoint Energy	2	L,N
Salvation Army	1	C,N,O,Q,T
Southwestern Bell Telephone	1	B,L,N
Texas Division of Emergency Mgmt.	1	All
Texas Medical Center	1	B
U.S. Coast Guard	2	
Veterans Affairs - VA Hospital	1	